

State of the City Address

January 17, 2012

Good evening, everyone. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to share my State of the City Address with you.

I would like to begin by listing some of the accomplishments that our City departments have worked on throughout 2011. As you hear what was done, I would like you to listen for a common thread.

This has been a year of change and positive direction looking forward. Our revenues are beginning to improve, providing more optimism and encouragement for us to focus on projects that have been on the back burner for several years.

To help trim our workforce, without laying people off, a retirement incentive was offered to our employees. The Human Resources Department worked with a Benefits Committee to design and execute this program. Thirty four individuals took advantage of this opportunity and their departure left holes in many of our departments. With only 8 being replaced, we undertook a reorganization process that allowed us to streamline several departments. This created the need for some personnel relocations, along with increased patience and flexibility from our employees. I believe this was a successful endeavor that has put us on a path to take advantage of the savings that were realized due to those who retired.

As part of this reorganization, the responsibility for insurance and risk matters have been moved to the City Attorney's Office. This year they saved \$80,000 in premiums with the help of Moreton and Company. I will be working with them as we consider expanding our risk fund to create the ability to be self-insured with limited coverage for catastrophic claims.

The Criminal Prosecution division was involved in about 8,000 cases including 50 appeals to district court. The Justice Court successfully completed a merger of the court information system with the State courts. They have taken over the responsibility from the Police Department to take fingerprints during business hours, which has benefitted both groups and help tie records together more accurately.

The Police Department warrant program has been very successful. Since its implementation over 850 warrants have been cleared and many closed. The Department received help from the JAG funding, allowing several important equipment improvements. The Patrol Division was outfitted with Barcode Scanners to reduce time in the field while running drivers licenses and

vehicle registrations. Vehicle maintenance costs have increased by \$71,000 over 2008 numbers since budgets have not allowed us to continue the vehicle replacement program.

The Fire Department made some organizational changes which included adding a deputy chief position. The battalion chiefs moved from a daytime schedule to filling both the administrative and shift responsibilities. In 2011 the Department responded to over 3,500 medical calls and transported over 2,000 patients. They also answered over 1,500 calls for fires and other kinds of emergencies.

I value the work of our public safety departments and appreciate the extra efforts they make in supporting other causes in our City. They represent us well and deserve our respect and consideration.

With the retirement of several department heads, a new consolidated department, the Administrative and Development Services Department, was created. It includes the Information Technology and Geographic Information System Divisions, the Recorder's Office, Treasury and Utility Billing, Community and Economic Development, and the Building Division.

The City IT Strategic Plan was completed and is moving forward with an IT Governance Committee formulating policies and procedures. With all the advances in technology, this plan will provide direction for the best use of our IT funding. A new internal helpdesk process will assist our network administrators and programmers in meeting the needs of our employees, who in turn, can better serve our residents. Having the very capable GIS Division in place has expanded our ability to use mapping in many aspects of running the City. When we struggled with flooding early last year, their ability to map problem areas and provide information to those living and helping there was extremely valuable.

The Recorder's Division successfully administered the municipal elections this year. They work extensively in all the purchasing in the City. There are hundreds of documents and agreements that they track and control for our day-to-day operation.

Also as part of the reorganization, the Treasurer functions, utility billing, and meter reading were combined into this Division. A billing process was added for new customers purchasing services from UTOPIA. They are also now receiving funds for animal licensing.

Business Licensing was incorporated into the Community and Economic Development Division this year. The Murray City Center District Ordinance was adopted after a time intensive effort that will promote redevelopment in this important area of the City. The partnership with NeighborWorks to use our CDBG funding has already resulted in the purchase and rehabilitation of 2 homes. These will be sold to low-to-moderate income families. Ten loans totaling \$57,000 were made as part of our Down Payment Assistance program. Staff is also

working diligently to foster economic development in the City. They are currently in contact with medical office and hotel groups interested in creating additional investments in our community.

Zoning enforcement is part of this Division. They handled over 270 complaints during the year and collaborated with the Police Department and Mayor's Office to work through concerns that were raised.

Building permits increased in 2011 and much focus was on Fashion Place Mall, auto dealerships and medical facilities. Fashion Place added over 92,000 square feet to the Mall with several first-to-Utah stores. New housing is being built in the Fireclay RDA, with other mixed-use opportunities included. The coordination with business licensing in this area is seen as a positive move by those interested in building projects here.

There have been many projects completed or in progress during 2011 in the Public Services Department. Even with limited funds available for road improvements, we have accomplished work in many areas of the City. 4800 South, east of State Street, has long been a bumpy drive. With the final inch of asphalt to be laid this spring, that is no longer the case. Much needed infrastructure was repaired and replaced in this area as part of the project. A large portion of our Class C road funds were used for pavement maintenance projects and 140,000 square yards of slurry seal were placed on streets around the City. A few examples of the work accomplished include:

- 3900 potholes that were repaired with 87 tons of asphalt
- 400 green waste trailers were delivered, picked up and dumped
- 550 free truck loads of wood chips were picked up.

Last year about 2800 hours of volunteer service were given to benefit our parks. Three pavilions in Murray Park are being repaired to be ready for use this summer. Recreation programs continue to be very popular and a new walking club was started this year to take advantage of our great trail system. Over 300,000 people came to the Park Center in various capacities in 2011.

Our history and arts programs involved 2000 artists of all ages, with 36,000 patrons enjoying the creativity of local artists through both performing and visual arts. "Arts in the Parks" is the most popular, with over 12,000 people attending performances.

The Heritage Center raised over \$45,000 toward the newly completed entrance to the building. Community Development Block Grant funds provided the remaining funding. The entrance provides a safe drop off location for participants. The Center served almost 13,000 hot meals in 2011.

The Cemetery sold the remaining grave sites this year and held 187 funeral services.

The City enterprise funds have also made many improvements this year. The water meter replacement project was completed and in several areas lines were replaced or maintained. A study was completed assessing the capacity of McGhie Springs that will guide us as we protect and utilize this important water source. The sewer division obtained State funding for improvement projects identified in our master plan. Central Valley completed the construction of the composting facilities to produce and sell "Oquirrh Mountain Compost Products."

The Stormwater Master Plan was completed and I will be recommending an increase to rates to help accomplish the projects that are necessary. We are coordinating a big project with Midvale that will be done in 2012.

Lynn F. Pett Murray Parkway Golf Course was in very good condition this year. All maintenance practices were evaluated for efficiency to compensate for lower revenues. Fewer seasonal work hours were used to trim the budget. Their recycling program was expanded and very little waste goes to the landfill. The irrigation system is of major concern and needs to be replaced.

The Power Department continues to provide excellent service with a 99.99% 'power on' rating, as reliability continues to be the hallmark of this department. Employees have worked on many of the projects in the City including Fashion Place Mall, the Miller Development, Larry Miller Honda, and FrontRunner. They have focused on scheduling power resources efficiently and saved large sums of money. The Power Department completed installing radio read meters for residential customers in 2011, greatly improving productivity.

We are excited to celebrate the Centennial of our Murray City Library in 2012. Many fun events including the entire community will mark this occasion.

The common thread I mentioned earlier is the dedication of our outstanding employees. We must recognize their effort with more than words this next year. We must compensate them with a cost of living adjustment and the reinstatement of our merit system.

As the true face of Murray City services, our employees stood with us through the economic downturn and the reorganization. This is our opportunity to stand with them. The challenges from the recession are beginning to lift and it is time to address issues that were put on hold. I am optimistic that we are making headway in improving our financial picture and that this is a time for us to evaluate our needs and set priorities. We have aging vehicles, computers and other facilities that must be repaired or replaced.

We are in the middle of an exciting strategic planning process that involves input from staff, residents and the City Council. In the next few months, we will have a Capital Improvement Program in place that will help us focus as we address long term needs.

We have been discussing the need to replace our City Hall for many years. The time has come to develop a financial strategy to get this process underway. We have a one-time opportunity to participate in the rebuilding of Hillcrest Jr. High, to share the facility in a way that makes it a more valuable resource to our community as a whole. I am anxious to meet the needs and interests of our citizens, including a Performing Arts Center. We need to consider how we will update the Armory property, finish the connection of Cottonwood Street to 4500 South and fund a Bus Rapid Transit route that is proposed. I am looking forward to seeing these items come to fruition.

This is the year to set us on the path to accomplishing the goals that our residents care about, but we cannot accomplish these feats alone. Working together has been the mantra that has kept Murray City moving forward. I am committed to continuing this tradition as we plan and focus on establishing our priorities for the future.

Thank you.